

**TOWN OF HOLDERNESS
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
BUDGET COMMITTEE
WORK SESSION MINUTES
December 14, 2020**

Select Board Members Present: Chair, Jill White, Vice Chair, Woodie Laverack, Peter Francesco and Kelly Schwaner.

Budget Committee Members Present: Chair, Ken Evans, Bob Maloney, Kevin Barrett, Todd Elgin and Dayna Titus

Others Present: Town Administrator, Michael Capone, Holderness Central School Board Chair, Carolyn Mello and SAU Business Administrator, Dan Rossner

Call to Order: Mr. Evans called the meeting to order at 5:31PM. Mr. Evans welcomed Ms. Mello and Mr. Rossner to the meeting. He thanked them for attending this evening and for their time and effort on behalf of the Central School.

Holderness Central School Operating Budget: Ms. Mello mentioned that she would review each page of the budget and take questions. Prior to beginning her review, Mr. Barrett inquired as to the enrollment numbers for the current year. It was noted that there were 146 students physically in the building and 25 more participating through remote learning. This is an increase over last year's enrollment.

In reviewing the first page of the budget, Ms. Mello mentioned that a large portion of the overall budget increase this year was attributed to the increase in New Hampshire Retirement system contributions necessitated by the changes to the funding formula approved by the Retirement Board of Trustees.

Mr. Maloney, a member of the Board of Trustees, provided some background on the changes to the funding formula noting that lower interest assumptions have led the Trustees to increase the retirement contribution percentage.

Mr. Rossner also commented on the impact of the retirement contributions to the overall budget noting that increases to retirement system payments added more than \$72,000 to the operating budget.

Special Education expenses and health insurance premiums were among the other major contributors to the overall increase in the operating budget.

Mr. Francesco asked if the Board could review the increase in the Budget for Field Trips as the increase did not seem to be in line with the previous actual budgeted expenses.

Mr. Barrett asked if there were to be a request to decrease the operating budget by 1% of the operating budget, from where would the funds be taken? Mr. Rossner replied that once the School Board approves the Budget any proposed changes would have to be defined by the Budget Committee.

Warrant Articles: Ms. Mello then reviewed the Warrant Articles and took questions from those present.

Mr. Barrett inquired as to the mix of funding for Article 2 that set aside \$92,800 for window replacement and network infrastructure. Mr. Rossner noted that approximately \$33,200 was to go to window replacement and the balance to network infrastructure.

There was some conversation with regard to article three and the computers available to students. Mr. Rossner explained how the computers were distributed at the different grade levels.

There was some discussion with regard to fund balances and the projects to be accomplished with the Capital Reserve allocations proposed in Article 4 and 5.

Both Ms. Mello and Mr. Rossner provided, to the extent they were permitted by the confidentiality of the negotiation process, some background on Article 6, the Support Staff Collective bargaining agreement. In response to questions from those present they provided a comparison of the benefits negotiated versus existing benefits already in place in other communities and districts. There was considerable discussion with regard to the magnitude and financial implications of this warrant article.

Ms. Mello and Mr. Rossner also provided some background on the projects contemplated for the School Building Capital Reserve Fund referenced in Article 7.

Mr. Evans thanked both Ms. Mello and Mr. Rossner for their presentation and expressed his appreciation for how the process has evolved through the years.

Draft minutes of the December 9,2020 Work Session: Mr. Evans noted that the draft minutes had been made available for review by the Town Administrator prior to the meeting. Mr. Maloney made a motion to approve them as written with a second from Ms. Titus. There being no further discussion, those present voted 9-0 in favor of the motion.

There being no further business to come before the meeting, it was adjourned at 7:12PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michael R. Capone
Town Administrator